

Example of WSDOT Biological Assessment Format

Section Heading	Contents of Section and Subheadings	Notes
Executive Summary or Summary	One to two-page summary of proposed action, listed species and critical habitat evaluated, project effects on species and habitat, conservation measures (CMs), effect determinations, and hydrologic unit code (HUC) for the project site watershed	Keep it brief and concise.
Table of Contents		Make sure page references are correct.
List of Tables		Make sure page references are correct.
List of Figures		Make sure page references are correct.
Introduction	Project proponent Federal nexus Project purpose/need/history Consultation activities with the USFWS and NOAA Fisheries, including date of pre-BA meeting if one was attended, and names of the USFWS and NOAA biologists attending	
Project Location	Project location (milepost begin/end of project, township/range, latitude/longitude, watershed, HUC)	Include vicinity map.
General Project Description	General project description (per the BA form, discuss project timeline and project footprint, and incorporate detailed project component modules into the project description as necessary) Construction activities and types of equipment Secondary project features (staging areas, detours, waste/stockpile areas, etc.) and directly related BMPs	Photos or simple project plans may be inserted in this section, or more detailed figures may be referenced in the appendices.
Detailed Project Description	Detailed project descriptions of major project elements, as needed	Use the modules in the BA form to facilitate incorporation of these descriptions into the BA.

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Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures	Impact avoidance and minimization measures (conservation measures, best management practices [BMPs], and performance standards) Other applicable documents if available (e.g., temporary erosion & sedimentation control [TESC] plan, spill prevention, control, & countermeasures [SPCC] plan, memorandums of understanding [MOUs], etc.)	Highlight project features designed to minimize impacts. Compile CMs into a single list or summary, including additional CMs that may be identified for specific species.
Project Action Area	Definition and delineation of action area with supporting rationale Map of action area	Insert a map or aerial photo with action area identified.

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Species and Habitat Information	<p>List of species and habitats addressed in the BA</p> <p>Explanation of why other species on NOAA Fisheries or USFWS lists are not addressed in the BA</p>	<p>Include a table identifying listed and proposed species addressed in BA. Provide detailed information on site-specific species occurrence and habitat conditions. Place general information on species and habitat requirements in appendices.</p>
Occurrence of Federally Listed and Proposed Species in the Action Area	<p>Species occurrence in the action area, including life history stages that occur within the action area</p> <p>Presence or absence of suitable habitat for listed and proposed species in the action area</p> <p>Presence or absence of critical habitat in the action area</p>	<p>Address terrestrial and aquatic species separately, as indicated in the BA form.</p>
Environmental Setting within the Action Area	<p>Presence and condition of general habitat features as they pertain to species addressed in the BA (describing applicable baseline conditions only, focusing on elements necessary to complete the analysis of effects)</p>	<p>Photos and maps, which are helpful for federal reviewers, may be inserted in this section.</p>
(Terrestrial and Marine Conditions)	<p>Assessment of all environmental characteristics relevant to listed species addressed in the BA</p> <p>Assessment of project effects on existing environmental conditions at project site scale and/or action area scale</p>	<p>If the project has no aquatic impacts and is isolated from aquatic habitat, provide information on the terrestrial environment only.</p>
Environmental Baseline (Freshwater Conditions) <i>(aquatic species)</i>	<p>Summary table of aquatic baseline conditions and anticipated impacts at watershed and project scales (in the body of the BA)</p> <p>Citation of framework (USFWS or NOAA Fisheries) used for this analysis</p> <p>Assessment of all relevant pathways and indicators that will be affected by the project and for which data are sufficient (detailed analyses in BA appendices)</p> <p>Assessment of project effects on the baseline at watershed and/or action area scales (detailed analyses in BA appendices)</p>	<p>Use limiting factor analysis, limiting factor reports, aerial photos, field investigations, and consultation with professionals for supporting information.</p>

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Analysis of Effects	<p>Assessment of direct effects of the proposed action</p> <p>Assessment of indirect effects of the proposed action</p> <p>Assessment of effects of interrelated and interdependent actions</p> <p>Summary of avoidance and minimization measures</p> <p>Assessment of cumulative effects of the proposed action (for formal consultations only)</p>	<p>Tie potential effects to compliance with species recovery plans, management plans, and/or habitat conservation plans. Analyze in detail only project impacts that potentially affect listed species and critical habitat.</p>

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Conclusions and Effect Determinations	Listed and proposed species, and/or designated and proposed critical habitat Summary of primary project impacts on species and habitats Effect determination and summary of rationale, for each species analyzed	Place all information on candidate species in BA appendix.
References	List of information resources used in BA preparation	
Appendices	WSDOT Fish Removal Protocols and Standards Species Lists from USFWS and NOAA Fisheries Biology of Listed Species Candidate Species Information Essential Fish Habitat Assessment Environmental Baseline for Aquatic Habitats	
WSDOT Fish Removal Protocols and Standards	(Include if applicable)	
Species Lists	Species Lists from USFWS and NOAA Fisheries	
Biology of Listed Species	General information on life history and habitat requirements	
Candidate Species Information	Occurrence of candidate species in the project action area Analysis of effects Effect determinations	
Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment	Federal mandate (Magnuson-Stevens Act) EFH managed species potentially present in project vicinity Elements of EFH present in project vicinity Analysis of project impacts, referencing ESA Analysis of Effects section above if necessary Effect determination for EFH	Address EFH separately from ESA analysis: entire EFH discussion is in BA appendix, not body of BA.
Environmental Baseline for Aquatic Habitats	Detailed environmental baseline discussion of the NOAA Fisheries/USFWS indicators and pathways	